Abstract prepared for "The Universe as seen by ISO" meeting, to be held in Paris, October 1998

SIRTF MOVES AHEAD

M.W.Werner, Jet Propulsion Laboratory

Even as we enjoy the fruits of the highly successful ISO mission it is possible to look ahead with certainty to the next infrared observatory in space, SIRTF - the Space Infrared Telescope Facility. SIRTF is approved and funded within NASA and is on schedule for launch in December 2001. SIRTF combines the intrinsic sensitivity of a cryogenic space telescope with the powerful imaging and spectroscopic capabilities of modern infrared detector arrays. As a result, SIRTF uniquely combines great power for the study of known astrophysical problems with unparalleled potential for yet further discovery and exploration. SIRTF has an 85-cm diameter telescope and three instruments which provide imaging from 3-to-180um and spectroscopy and spectrophotometry fom 5-to-100um. It will operate with very high efficiency from an Earth-trailing heliocentric orbit. Current models project a 5yr cryogenic lifetime for SIRTF.

Participants in the ISO symposium are encouraged to think about how to use SIRTF to follow-up and go beyond the results from ISO and from other related missions. Over 75% of the observing time during the SIRTF mission will be awarded to the general scientitic community via peer-reviewed proposals. The general community will be awarded time both for General Observer programs and for "Legacy Science" programs, which will be large investigations aimed both at high priority science problems and at creating coherent data bases for follow-on and archival research purposes.

All categories of scientific participation in SIRTF are open to astronomers from all countries.

This talk will summarize the scientific capabilities and the innovative mission design features of SIRTF. Special emphasis will be placed on the schedule and opportunities for general community participation in SIRTF. The first opportunity to apply for time on SIRTF will come with the call for Legacy Science proposals in July of 2000, less than two years from the date of this meeting. Information about the capabilities, status and schedule for SIRTF and Web-based tools permitting time estimation for potential SIRTF programs can be found at the SIRTF home page: http://sirtf.jpl.nasa.gov/sirtf.home.html.

This work was carried out at the Jet Propulsion Laboratory, California Institute of Technology, under contract with the National Aeronautics and Space Administration

++++++++++++++++

Michael W.Werner
M/S 264/767
Jet Propulsion Laboratory
818/354-0146 [phone]
818/393-4426 [fax]
mww@ipac.caltech.edu